

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O R 051802Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3880

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 26117

EXDIS

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SUGGEST DEPT PASS TO SECRETARY AND APPROPRIATE
MINIMIZE POSTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, XF

SUBJECT: FRANCE AND THE PLO

SUMMARY: QUAI OFFICIAL'S COMMENTS UNDERLINE THE GROWING
IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE FRENCH TO THE PLO AS AN
ELEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN EQUATION. WE THINK THAT
THE FRENCH ARE ACTIVELY CONSIDERING GRANTING RECOGNITION
TO A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT IN EXILE. END SUMMARY

1. DURING NOVEMBER 5 TOUR D'HORIZON, QUAI DEPUTY
DIRECTOR FOR THE LEVANT ROUILLON TOLD US HE PERSONALLY
DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PLO
GOVERNMENT IN EXILE IS IMMINENT, A VIEW MANY OF HIS
COLLEAGUES DO NOT SHARE, HE SAID. HE INDICATED THAT
THE FRENCH HAVE REPORTS FROM BEIRUT INDICATING THAT
ANNOUNCEMENT OF A PLO GOVERNMENT WILL BE MADE SOON.
MOREOVER, A PLO OFFICIAL IN KUWAIT TOLD THE FRENCH A
PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT MUST EXIST BEFORE THE PLO GOES
TO GENEVA, BUT ROUILLON DOUBTS THAT NEGOTIATIONS THERE
WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

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2. THE PLO OFFICIAL IN KUWAIT ALSO CLAIMED THAT A

FUTURE PALESTINIAN STATE WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE ISRAEL BUT, UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS, MIGHT WELL RENOUNCE BELLIGERENCY, AND WOULD HAVE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP (CONFEDERAL) WITH JORDAN. (ARAFAT GAVE FONMIN SAUVAGNARGUES NO SIGN OF WILLINGNESS TO MAKE A FEDERAL ARRANGEMENT WITH JORDAN, ROUILLON REMARKED.) ROUILLON OFFERED HIS OPINION THAT SUCH PALESTINIAN WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT NON-BELLIGERENCY, IF TRUE, WOULD BE A SUBSTANTIAL STEP TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT. HE THOUGHT ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE OF A DIALOGUE, EVEN INDIRECT, WITH THE PLO AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT TO ANY FURTHER PARTIAL DIS-ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT.

3. IN RESPONSE TO A DIRECT QUESTION ABOUT THE PROBABLE FRENCH REACTION TO THE FORMATION OF A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT IN EXILE, ROUILLON RESPONDED THAT THE FRENCH WOULD EXAMINE THE CONCRETE SITUATION AT THE MOMENT AND MAKE THEIR DECISION IN LIGHT OF EXISTING FACTS AND AS A FUNCTION OF THE ANNOUNCED PROGRAM OF THE PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT. HE SAID FRANCE WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE A GOVERNMENT WHOSE PROGRAM INCLUDED THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL BUT ADDED THAT THE PLO WOULD BE CLEVER ENOUGH NOT TO BROADCAST ANY SUCH INTENTION. THE REAL PROBLEM WOULD BE JURIDICAL, SAID ROUILLON, SINCE FRANCE HAS NEVER GIVEN INITIAL RECOGNITION TO A GOVERNMENT HAVING CONTROL OVER NO TERRITORY, ALTHOUGH IN THE PAST FRANCE HAS CONTINUED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 26117

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TO RECOGNIZE GOVERNMENTS THAT HAVE LOST THEIR TERRITORY,
I.E. POLAND IN WORLD WAR II.

4. COMMENT: ROUILLON OBVIOUSLY IS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT
INTERNAL FRENCH JURIDICAL OBJECTIONS TO RECOGNITION OF A
PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT THAN HE IS TO ANY LIKELY ADVERSE
EFFECT ON FRENCH INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST THAT SUCH
RECOGNITION MIGHT ENTAIL. WE ARE NOT SURE THAT HE REAL-
LY BELIEVES ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT IS
NOT IMMINENT AND HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE QUAI OF-
FICIALS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH THE ARAB-ISRAELI
CONFLICT TEND TO BELIEVE THAT FRENCH INTERESTS WOULD BE
SERVED BY DISCREET FRENCH ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE FORMATION
OF A GOVERNMENT IN EXILE WHICH THE FRENCH COULD ALMOST
IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZE. WHILE WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO
SUPPORT IT' OUR HUNCH IS THAT THE FRENCH MAY BE ACTIVELY
ATTEMPTING TO USE THEIR EVENTUAL RECOGNITION OF A
PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT TO FURTHER THEIR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN
COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH THE ARAB STATES WHICH WOULD
INCLUDE ASSURED OIL SUPPLIES AT ACCEPTABLE PRICES AND
SUBSTANTIAL FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN ARAB INDUSTRIAL
AND MILITARY DEVELOPMENT. IN ANY CASE, THE FRENCH
"COMMITMENT" TO THE ARAB SIDE IS NOW SUCH THAT THE GOF
MIGHT WELL FEEL IMPELLED TO RECOGNIZE A PALESTINIAN
GOVERNMENT LEST FRANCE'S "FAVORED" POSITION WITH THE
ARABS BE IRREVOCABLY COMPROMISED.

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